

Message Text

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72

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 LOC-01 L-02 CU-02 COME-00 TAR-01

USIA-06 /026 W

----- 127030

R 111815Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6636

INFO ALL CONSULATES IN MEXICO

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REF: STATE 045755; MEXICO A-68; MEXICO 354

1. LOCAL IMPORTER WHO PREVIOUSLY PROVIDED INFORMATION THAT HIS SHIPMENTS WERE NOT BEING SUBJECT TO DUTY INFORMED EMBASSY THAT HE LATER RECEIVED SINGLE BILL COVERING ALL SHIPMENTS CROSSED AFTER JAN. 1. GOM IS APPLYING 5 PERCENT DUTY TO ALL BOOK SHIPMENTS, IRRESPECTIVE OF LANGUAGE, ARRIVING VIA OCEAN OR SURFACE FREIGHT. HE CONFIRMED THAT POSTAL SHIPMENTS, WHICH REPRESENT SMALLER PART OF HIS BUSINESS, HAVE NOT YET BEEN TAXED AND HE IS ANXIOUS TO KEEP IT THAT WAY. (USG SHOULD NOT PUBLICIZE FACT THAT MEXICAN POSTAL SERVICE NOT APPLYING DUTY). HIS FIRM HAS RAISED PRICES ON ALL BOOKS TO COMPENSATE.

2. EMBASSY PREVIOUSLY REPORTED NEW DUTY (MEXICO A-68, 3/4/75) AND MEXICAN OFFICIALS COMMENTS ON IT AT SEMINAR ON NEW IMPORT TARIFF, COMPARING IT WITH DUTIES SUPPOSEDLY CHARGED BY OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING US.

3. MEXICAN PRINTING INDUSTRY IS MAJOR FORCE BEHIND BARRIERS ON FOREIGN BOOKS AND PERIODICALS. IT HAS BEEN CONCERNED OVER ITS INABILITY TO COMPETE IN PRICE WITH MASSIVE FOREIGN PRINTINGS COMING MAINLY FROM SPAIN AND ARGENTINA. IN PAST TWO YEARS, BOOK IMPORTS JUMPED FROM SOME 200 MILLION PESONS TO 600 MILLION. GRAPHIC ARTS CHAMBER REPORTS PUBLISHERS FROM SPAIN HAVE AGREED TO PRINT THEIR BOOKS IN MEXICO FOR MEXICAN MARKET. THIS WAS ONLY AGREED TO UNDER THREAT OF QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIVE

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MEASURES. MEXICAN INDUSTRY IS NOT OPPOSED TO FREE IMPORTATION

OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE BOOKS, INCLUDING ENGLISH, AND TEXTBOOKS.

4. MEXICAN INDUSTRY IS PLEASED WITH GOM IMPOSITION OF 5 PERCENT DUTY ON BOOKS BUT WOULD HAVE MUCH PREFERRED GLOBAL QUOTAS OR QUOTAS PER TITLE. IT BELIEVES 5 PERCENT RATE TOO LOW TO REDUCE FLOW OF INEXPENSIVE FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS. IT IS WILLING, HOWEVER, TO WAIT TO JUDGE RESULT OF IMPORT DUTY BEFORE RENEWING PRESSURE ON GOM FOR MORE RESTRICTIVE MEASURES. INDUSTRY BELIEVES GOM SEIZED ON DUTY AS EASIEST AND LEAST CONTROVERSIAL MEANS OF PROTECTING INDUSTRY AND AT SAME TIME RAISING REVENUE.
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